

Rare-coin fans to assemble for international fair

By Roger Boye

More than 100 rare-coin dealers from around the world will converge on Chicago in mid-March for the 9th annual Chicago International Coin Fair.

Despite the expected arrival of so many hobby pros, fair organizers have scheduled activities for collectors of all backgrounds and ages, including youngsters. For example, an officer of the respected American Numismatic Association will conduct a meeting for persons under 18 that will include a for-youth-only "mini-auction."

Such sessions enhance CICF's reputation as the country's best annual show devoted exclusively to foreign coins. This year dealers from 11 countries will sell their wares during a huge bourse to be set up in the Regency Ballroom of the Hyatt Regency Hotel, 151 E. Wacker Dr., with prices of collectibles ranging from a few cents to thousands of dollars each.

Hours of the bourse will be from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. March 16 and 17, and from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. March 18. The special session for youngsters begins at 1 p.m. March 17 in the hotel's San Francisco Room.

Several hobby organizations will hold public meetings in the hotel during the three days, and the fair's sponsor, the Rare Coin Company of America in Chicago, will conduct a two-part auction. Schedules of the activities will be available at the fair registration desk outside the ballroom; admission to all events is free.

● If Abe Lincoln appears to be a bit happier in 1984-dated cents, your eyes may not be playing tricks on you.

Engravers have strengthened design details on dies used to make this year's cents, according to a government technician in Coin World. The minute changes, which seemingly sweeten Lincoln's disposition, are easiest to see around Lincoln's mouth.

Meanwhile, bureaucrats report that they churned out 18.1 billion coins in 1983, an average of 80 for every United States citizen. The total was some 7 percent less than 1982's record, caused by a drop in Lincoln cent production. Presumably, the recession lessened consumer demand for the lowly penny.

Still, 1983 mintage was nearly double the number of coins made 10 years ago and some five times that of 1963's total.

● Forty dealers will buy and sell rare coins next weekend at the 46th annual show of the Racine Numismatic Society. Hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. next Sunday at the New Sheraton Racine Motor Inn, 7111 Washington Ave., Racine, Wis. Admission is free.